

STATE OF MONTANA
Department of Natural Resources and Conservation
Conservation Districts Bureau
Box 201601
Helena, MT 59620-1601

For Department Use

Received by _____
Date _____
Application No. _____
Annual Budget Submitted _____

Conservation Districts Grant Program
HB 223 Grant Application

Please fill out application completely.

1. Name of District: Yellowstone Conservation District
2. Name of Project: Yellowstone County Salt Cedar Management Project 2021
3. Amount Requested: \$25,000.00
4. Total Project Cost: \$149,000.00
5. Has the district levied the maximum county mills allowed for the current fiscal year?
No _____ Yes _____ Mill Levy = \$ _____ (amount)

Mill Levy Verification _____
Name Title Date

Note: Acceptable signatures verifying a county mill levy includes the county commissioner, treasurer, finance officer, or clerk and recorder. Also acceptable is the annual mill levy verification form.

6. Has this project been identified in a conservation district plan? (Projects must be part of a CD plan).
Yes, identified in YCD's Annual Plan of Operations
7. Give a brief statement of need, including why the project cannot be financed from present sources of funding. (If the district has not submitted a budget to DNRC for other financial assistance programs for the current fiscal year, a current CD budget must be attached).
Yellowstone CD's budget cannot absorb the amount required to carry out the Salt Cedar Project.
8. Conservation District's contact person's name, address, and telephone number:
LaVerne Ivie, Administrator
1371 Rimtop Drive
Billings, MT 59105
9. This application was approved by the _____ Conservation District Board
of Supervisors meeting on the _____

Revised 2020

Authorized Signature

Project Statement

Describe the project using no more than three sentences. Be concise and describe the objective of the project, the action(s) required to complete it, and the accomplishments that will be delivered.

Statement Narrative: The 2021 Yellowstone River Salt Cedar Project will be a continuation of the 2020 Salt Cedar Project which will entail the control of massive and densely populated infestations of tamarisk along the Yellowstone River Riparian Area corridor. The 2021 project will begin at Road 21 North in the Huntley Project Area.

Examples

The objective of the project is to educate 400 4th graders in Silver Bow County about natural resources and conservation. Students will learn about soils, water, fire, and rangeland health. The deliverable will be an all-day event at the civic center.

The objective of the project is to control salt cedar along 15 miles of the Yellowstone River between Laurel and Park City. The salt cedar will be killed by hand spraying and using an excavator to remove larger plants. At the completion of the project, 15 miles and 60 acres of salt cedar will be controlled.

The objective of this project is to conduct a feasibility study in four drought-afflicted counties to determine if cover crops will improve moisture retention. At the completion of this project data will be available to help make future decisions about soil health.

Project Details

1. What is the purpose of the project? How many people or acres will benefit from this project?

To mitigate the negative impacts to the riparian health of the Yellowstone River caused by existing salt cedar (a non-native perennial – category 2 – MT) populations. Salt cedar displaces the native plant communities by creating monocultures, consuming large quantities of water which causes habitat loss and compromises the natural regeneration of native riparian plant cycles. By controlling and reducing the salt cedar population, it will increase the amount of available water to support beneficial usage for all urban/agricultural/recreational purposes, improves the habitat quality for area resident and migratory wildlife species by minimizing the competition with native plant communities.

The project area for 2021 will cover approximately 803 acres and is located in between Road 16 North and Road 24 North in the Huntley-Worden area. This area supports diversified agriculture consisting of sugar beets, grain corn, alfalfa, wheat, malt barley, and large and small cattle operations.

2. Where is the project located?

Yellowstone County – Yellowstone River riparian buffer of a ¼ - ½ mile wide; 15.10 miles northeast of the Huntley Bridge on the Yellowstone River at the north end of Road 21 North located in the Huntley Project Area.

3. What is the conservation district's role in this project?

4. What are the conservation benefits? The main objective for this project; diminish the threat to old oxbow floodplain areas along the Yellowstone River, treat old salt cedar infestations as well as new infestations, map treated area, map next years proposed area of treatment, and monitor old project areas for escapes or new seedlings and treat these as needed. These objectives are critical in making this project a success each continuing year. Rapid growing Salt cedar plants make it critical to continue with this project along the river riparian area. Salt cedar is a massive water consumer; 7.7-acre feet of water for every acre of infestation which is equivalent to 2.8 million gallons of water. That in turn, causes vegetation loss of the more useful plants, and degradation of native habitats that are critical in maintaining a healthy functioning ecosystem. Control of Salt cedar will enhance vegetation and wildlife habitats. We have already seen the benefits of desirable vegetation re-growing in past treated areas. This becomes very beneficial to mankind for agricultural and recreational purposes and all wildlife habitats.
5. What are the public benefits? 1. Protect Agriculture - What is the number one important factor in agriculture? Water!!! Salt Cedar is called the Thirsty Tree, 1 solid acre of Salt Cedar can use up to 7.7-acre feet of water which is equivalent to 2.8 million gallons of water. Salt cedar can also take over valuable grazing lands thus reducing the economic profits for farmers and ranchers. With agriculture being the number one driver of the Montana Economy I feel it's important to reduce this threat along the Yellowstone River in Yellowstone County. 2. Prevent Flooding along the Yellowstone River - Salt Cedar trees are a main threat to the old oxbow floodplain areas along the Yellowstone River and if left unchecked these areas are going to become so infested with overgrowth of Salt Cedar infestations. These old oxbow areas act as relief valves during the high-water season thus reducing the chance of flooding elsewhere. The number of Salt Cedar trees that we are finding in these areas is incredibly astronomic and require a large amount of herbicide and man hours to control. 3. Reduce the threat to native habitat and native species - Salt Cedar infestations that become dense and saturated cause vegetation loss of your more desirable plant species and degradation of native habitats that are critical in maintaining a healthy functioning ecosystem. 4. Reduce the potential for fire - monocultures of salt cedar create dense brush like growth with lots of ground duff which is very flammable. Fires that occur in areas that are dense with salt cedar burn with the same types of fire behavior which is very characteristic of large forest fires.

6. How will this project be executed and who will do the work? The project work in this project will be accomplished by using a pontoon boat, atv's, utv's, and backpack spraying. The project will be contracted out to a commercial applicator and the Yellowstone County Weed District will assist with the project to fulfill its match requirements for the project.

7. What specific tasks, and outcomes will be accomplished? The Yellowstone River Salt Cedar Project has been ongoing since 2007 with a high success rate. To date 52.37 miles of river have been scouted, mapped, and treated. The Yellowstone River Salt Cedar Project will continue to be divided into workable sections. By dividing the river into workable sections allows us to be very thorough in scouting and treating areas of salt cedar infestations. The 2021 project will begin around Road 21 North in the Huntley Project Area and will travel upriver to around Road 16 North to finish up some islands that have not been treated due to access issues because of low water levels and not being able to get a boat into those areas. These islands will be sprayed earlier in the summer in 2021 when water levels are higher and we may also airlift in some totes so labor hours can be utilized efficiently. After these areas upriver are finished we will then continue from Road 21 North downriver as far as we can go until we utilize all the herbicide that was purchased for the project. Certain areas of the islands are extremely dense with trees, and numerous man-hours and a large quantity of herbicide will be required.; thus slowing down forward progress. The mature trees will be treated using the basal bark I.P.T. (individual plant treatment) method with Remedy Ultra/Impel via 4-wheelers, a jet boat for island access and backpack sprayers. The treatment methods success varies with timely applications, water levels, weather conditions and availability of man, machine and herbicide.

I have included a document which shows the tree counts dating back to 2007 when the Yellowstone River Salt Cedar Project was started at the Stillwater/Yellowstone County lines. The tree counts are approximately the number of trees that were treated each year of the project.

8. Identify the partners who will participate in this project? **(Do not list the cash or in-kind contributions under this question—those dollar amounts will be required on the Total Budget Page)**

Partner	Task Performed
FWP	Support of the project
BLM	Support of the project
Bureau of Reclamation	Support of the project
Yellowstone Conservation District	Grant Administration and Monetary Support
DNRC	Support of the project

9. When will this project start and when will it end? The 2021 Yellowstone River Salt Cedar Project will begin in September of 2021 and commence at the end of October 2021.

10. How will it be known if the project has been successful? **(Guideline #7 states: Applications must include a plan to monitor the effectiveness of the project.)** The following methods/activities will be used to evaluate the success of the project: 1) during the herbicide application process digital photos will be taken to establish plant growth and vigor; along with GPS point data collection to identify all treatment locations for future site inspection and analysis. The Yellowstone County Weed District will monitor the project area and complete any future spot treatments of Salt cedar plants the show any visible signs of re-growth and look for any new infestation locations that may emerge due to changes in the river geomorphology.

11. How will the district or sponsoring organization inform or educate the public about the project?
(Guideline#7 states: All grantees must write and disseminate a press release to local newspapers. The CD and DNRC's names must be mentioned as a source of funding. Conservation districts are also encouraged to publish articles in their newsletters, if available, but this may not take the place of a newspaper article).

Publications, networking systems such as the county website and possibly the Montana Weed Control Association Website. Public school education hosted by Yellowstone County Weed District Education Specialist along with field trips, NILE Education Program, Arbor Day Education Program, MATE Show Education Program, Southcentral Area Weed Education Trailer, and Invasive's in the Park Day.

223 Application Requirements for Equipment, Irrigation and Weed Projects

An application to purchase equipment must include a maintenance plan that includes rental fees, user deposit (if applicable), funding repair and maintenance, and long-term lease options of equipment (if applicable). Please describe.

For irrigation projects, including community garden sprinkler or drip irrigation grant requests must have a 50:50 cash match. On the Total Budget Page under column two, please specify the cash contributions of the partners.

Applications for weed projects must first demonstrate that funding was sought through the Noxious Weed Trust Fund at the Montana Department of Agriculture. Applications for aquatic invasive species projects must first demonstrate that funding was sought through the DNRC Aquatic Invasive Species Program. All weed projects must be coordinated with local weed districts—especially for the purchase and application of chemicals.

Status of Current DNRC Grants

List the status of **current** CARDD grants (all grant reports must be current before new grant funds will be disbursed).

223 Grant Budget

Provide a detailed budget indicating how grant funds will be used. Irrigation projects require a 50:50 cash match. Any project request exceeding \$20,000 must have a 50:50 cash match. Education grants cannot exceed \$10,000. Transfer all information in column one and two to the total budget table on page 6.

Item/Task Description	HB 223Funds	Explanation
Salaries (number of hours; hourly rate + benefits; type of work)		
Contracted services (identify services to be contracted)		
Per diem & travel expenses		
Communications & printing costs		
Materials & supplies (identify)	\$24,500.00	Purchase of Garlon 4 Ultra and Loveland Bark Oil
Equipment costs (identify)		
Miscellaneous (identify)		
Sub Total of Expenses	\$24,500.00	
Administration (based on a percentage of the total expenses, not to exceed 10 percent)	\$500.00	Administrative Fee -- Yellowstone Conservation District
TOTAL (expenses & administrative fee)	\$25,000.00	

Total Project Budget

Provide a detailed budget for the entire project including funding and in-kind contributions. In column one list the partner(s) and describe the task; in columns two through four only dollar amounts will be accepted.

Item/Task Description	223	Partner \$	Partner \$	Partner \$	In-Kind \$	Total
Salaries (number of hours; hourly rates + benefits; type of work)						0
Contracted services (identify services and professional/labor costs)		NWTF \$30,000.00	YCWD \$14,000.00			\$44,000.00
Per diem (\$23/day) & travel (.58/mile) expenses						0
Communications & printing costs						0
Materials & supplies (identify)	\$24,500.00 Herbicide	NWTF \$20,000.00 Herbicide	YCWD \$55,000.00 Herbicide	YCD \$5000.00		\$104,500.00
Equipment costs (identify)						0
Miscellaneous (identify)						0
Sub-Total of Expenses	\$24,500.00	\$50,000.00	\$69,000.00	0	0	0
Administration (based on a percentage of the total expenses not to exceed 10 percent)	\$500.00					\$500.00
Total (expenses & administration fee)	\$25,000.00	\$50,000.00	\$69,000.00	\$5000.00	\$ 0	\$149,000.00



Region 5 Headquarters
2300 Lake Elmo Drive
Billings, MT 59015

November 23, 2020

Yellowstone County Weed District
3319 King Ave East
Billings, MT 59101

To whom it may concern,

We here at Montana Fish Wildlife & Parks are fully in support of the Yellowstone County Salt Cedar Project for the 2021 season. The Yellowstone County Weed district have been great partners in weed management for the 11 Fishing Access Sites that FWP manages in the County. They have made great strides toward the eradication of salt cedar along the Yellowstone River drainage. As landowners and managers of public property, we appreciate the work that has been done and also what will be done in the future.

Sincerely,

Ryan Taynton
Fishing Access Site Program Manager
MT FWP Region 5
406-247-2964
rtaynton@mt.gov

YELLOWSTONE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

1371 RIMTOP DRIVE, BILLINGS, MT 59105

PHONE: 406.247.4420; FAX: 406.247.4416

To Whom It May Concern:

The Yellowstone Conservation District fully supports funding of the 2021 Yellowstone County Salt Cedar Management grant submitted to the Montana Noxious Weed Trust Fund grant program.

The specific objective of this project to attempt to eradicate the Saltcedar infestations that have been identified through previous aerial and ground-based inventory efforts and is identified as an action item in Yellowstone Conservation District's FY21 Annual Plan of Operations.

This project is a continuation of several years of spraying Salt Cedar on the Yellowstone River which the Yellowstone CD has partnered with the Yellowstone County Weed Board. We are seeing tremendous success since this program was implemented several years ago.

To augment funding of the 2021 project, the Yellowstone Conservation District plans to apply for a \$25,000 DNRC 223 grant. Last year, the 223 Committee was very receptive to Mr. Lockwood and Yellowstone Conservation District board member's presentation. We were very fortunate to receive the full \$25,000 requested because funds were tight and funding for most projects was either decreased or not funded at all.

The Yellowstone Conservation District hopes that the Montana Noxious Weed Trust Fund considers funding this very worthwhile project another year.

Cordially,

Chad Sedgwick
Yellowstone Conservation District Board of Supervisors



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Billings Field Office
5001 Southgate Drive
Billings, Montana 59101
<http://www.blm.gov/montana-dakotas>



November 17, 2020

In Reply Refer To:
9015 (MT010.LP)

Greta Dige
Grant Coordinator
Montana Noxious Weed Trust Fund
302 N. Roberts
Helena, Montana 59620

Dear Ms. Dige:

I am pleased to provide this letter of support for Yellowstone County Weed Districts grant proposal for the Yellowstone River Salt Cedar Project. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) lands within the project area consist of Pompeys Pillar National Monument, Bundy Island and a nearby grazing allotment. All the BLM lands are located on the Yellowstone River, a conduit for the spread of invasive species. Early detection and treatment are key components of our containment and eradication strategy for management of noxious weeds.

In 2001, our office and Yellowstone County entered into an assistance agreement that provides funding to the county for treatment services. The working relationship has been a success for the BLM, our grazing operator(s), recreationalists, neighboring land owners and the county. Through the assistance agreement we are able to aggressively treat a greater number of acres without common boundary issues. Yellowstone County has far exceeded our expectations by providing integrated weed and pest management, prevention and education to land owners, local schools and the community.

This project enables us to broaden treatment acres, achieve collaboration with various interests within the project area, and ultimately control noxious weeds.

If you have any questions, please feel free to call myself at (406) 896-5349 or Larry Padden, Natural Resource Specialist, Billings Field Office, at (406) 896-5237.

Sincerely,

DAVID
LEFEVRE

Digitally signed by DAVID
LEFEVRE
Date: 2020.11.17 13:25:01
-07'00'

David J. Lefevre
Field Manager
Billings Field Office

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
AND CONSERVATION
Southern Land Office



STEVE BULLOCK, GOVERNOR

STATE OF MONTANA

PHONE: (406) 247-4400
FAX: (406) 247-4419

1371 RIMTOP DRIVE
BILLINGS, MT 59103

17 November 2020

Yellowstone County Weed District
3319 King Avenue East
Billings, MT 59101

Letter of Support Regarding the Salt Cedar Project in Yellowstone County

To Whom It May Concern:

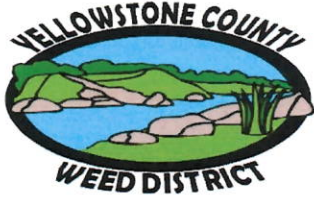
This letter is to support the Yellowstone River Salt Cedar Project in Yellowstone County. The Montana DNRC Southern Land Office encourages this project because it helps manage salt cedar on the multiple State-owned islands along the river. Many of these islands contain other noxious weed species as well as salt cedar and this project greatly decreases the spread/growth of these infestations. The management efforts of this project have also made a difference on neighboring properties which makes its importance that much more significant on the area.

Montana DNRC appreciates the time and energy that Yellowstone County Weed District has dedicated towards this project.

Very Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Zach Huyser".

Zach Huyser
Land Use Specialist
DNRC- Southern Land Office
406-247-4402
zach.huyser@mt.gov



SALT CEDAR PROJECT TREE COUNTS
(12/2/2020)

2007 -- ???

2008 – 30,365

2009 – 32,615

2010 – 92,185

2011 – NO PROJECT

2012 – 39,000

2013 – 56,000

2014 – 93,781

2015 – 358,350

2016 – 400,000

2017 – 550,000

2018 – 900,000

2019 – 1.3 million

2020 – 819,287